

The Kwanzaa Playground Narrative: An Anchor for Integrated Curriculum in Art Education

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Abstract

Integrated curriculum, an approach to education that includes diverse perspectives, disciplinary content and contextual nuances, continues to be a challenge to both teachers and students. It is sometimes difficult to make interesting and meaningful connections between and among disciplines. The difficulty may be due to the absence of a curricular anchor, a central content source, that helps to stabilize the many directions that can characterize the integrating process. Art content can function as that anchor. In this paper, a narrative about the Kwanzaa Playground in Columbus, Ohio, which contains original works of art, is offered as an example of a concept-rich, community-based art (education) project. The Kwanzaa Playground project has been the focus of a series of university level courses. The philosophical underpinnings of this project invite reflection on life-based themes which can support inquiry, meaning-making and coherent cross-curricular content.

Key words:

Kwanzaa Playground, integrated curriculum, community-based art.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide an example of an approach to creating integrated curriculum that places art at the center and that values the process of creating curricular content. This example is based on a series of seven university level art education courses, viewed collectively and taught over a period of nine years. All of the courses included content about the community-based art project, The Kwanzaa Playground, which includes African-inspired works or art. The majority of the students enrolled in these courses were pre- and in-service teachers at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Some of the courses were electives. One course was created by students who worked on individual community-based art projects for the purpose of generating pedagogy. The premise for this paper is that integrated curriculum can be anchored by focusing on works of art. Moreover, the multifocal approach to the integrated curriculum process becomes more meaningful and manageable when the content is interesting, invites inquiry and reflects life-based concepts rather than theory alone.

Practicing What We Teach

Over the years my students have observed that there is a rift between how we talk about education and the way that we implement it. That is, as educators we talk about the interactive process of teaching and learning and the relationship that should exist between and among academic disciplines. Integrated curriculum, an approach to education that includes diverse perspectives and disciplinary content and contextual nuances, continues to be both a conceptual and practical challenge (The Ohio State University TETAC Mentors, 2002; Pate, Homestead & McGinnis, 1997; Pasedo, 2000; Bailey, 2000). The consideration, creation and use of integrated curriculum by pre-service and in-service art educators is related to school change. However, it is not only a strategy for weaving curricular content together. It is an approach that invites inquiry, reconsideration of teaching philosophies by educators and stepped-up teacher preparation. Involvement in integrated curriculum should bring focus to the layered and sometimes problematic nature of the culture of teaching and learning. One teacher-trainer who uses technology to encourage teachers to develop integrated curriculum address-

es the concerns of some teachers and students:

It has been my experience that students who are exposed to curriculum integration take on the attitude of "why are we talking about History in my Math class". Upon further reflection, however, and with some gentle prodding from their teacher, these very same students come to realize that this approach has enhanced their learning by providing a more creative approach to both learning and teaching.

Since reading, for example, is a component of all subject areas, it seems only logical that the integration of core curriculum courses is only natural. One must be able to read with comprehension to solve math problems, understand the plot of a novel, write a research paper as well as understand the significance of historical events. Since we do not live in a vacuum students should not be taught in one. Providing students with a curriculum that integrates the various subjects opens up a whole new world of learning opportunities.

The question arises as to how educators can successfully integrate curriculum subjects. One of the problems that faces educators is finding common preparation time for curriculum collaboration. Collaboration is essential in creating a successful and creative integrated curriculum. Through collaboration teachers become more familiar with the learning objectives of the other areas and in turn discover how these objectives can be integrated into other subject areas as well.

A successful integrated curriculum involves a clear plan: assessments and activities that show the relationship between different courses and opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned in creative but meaningful ways. Through the use of technology students can illustrate the relationship of history to a literary work with a Power Point presentation; use Word to write a commentary on a social science theory; use Excel to further deve-

lop their mathematical and graphing skills.

The concept of having a "thread" of continuity through the various core subject areas of History, English, Social Studies, Science and Math likens itself to life itself. To successfully move through life one must master in some degree a familiarity with all of the aspects that make up living and how they relate to each other. Education is not so different.

(S, Pleasant, Area Instructional Technology Coordinator, Chicago Public Schools, personal communication, August 18, 2003)

Although, the core courses (e.g., English, math, history, and science) are often the focus of curriculum teams, Pleasant comments on the contribution of an art teacher:

..there is an art teacher, who in addition to having her students create art projects, included in her assessment of their work, their knowledge of art history. They were assigned to read about a specific artist and provide a written report about the artist which they shared with the class either as a Power Point presentation or just a Word document. In addition, to accompany their projects, which were in this case, small paper mache' sculptures, they were to write a poem about what the sculpture represented. This was a wonderful case of integrating various subject areas, in this case History, English and Art.

(S, Pleasant, Area Instructional Technology Coordinator, Chicago Public Schools, personal communication, August 18, 2003)

The Kwanzaa Playground: A Community Narrative as a Source for Integrated Curriculum

This section describes the story of the Kwanzaa Playground. The narrative is intended to illustrate the conceptual foundation of The Playground, its life-based possibilities and potential sources for building an art-centered integrated curriculum. The highlighted areas connote possible disciplinary and/or

conceptual departure points.

The Kwanzaa Playground was conceived in 1993 and dedicated on May 5, 1995 after several years of development spearheaded by its creator, Shirley Bowen, artist, educator and community activist. Bowen recalls the essence of her activism:

For us, the playground project became an outdoor learning lab, where we could explore the role of play in the lives of children, the potential of African art concepts to educate, impact and reclaim the minds and hearts of our children and their families. In the process of resurrecting a neglected playground, we had to heal relationships, improve communications, educate the community about African values and concepts, and especially increase self-esteem and self-pride among children constantly threatened by crime, violence and substance abuse (Bowen, S., personal communication, 1996).

Bowen was inspired to do this work by her then nine-year old son, Calid who expressed a desire for a better place to play. Thus, The Playground was conceived (history/political science: community activism). The Playground is a corner lot in an area of the city characterized by many social and cultural challenges and equally as many social and cultural opportunities and strengths. When the project was being developed alcohol, drug abuse and crime were counterbalanced by a thriving arts community, social and political activism, and the rebirth of local businesses. Local architecture ranges from humble homes to splendid, rehabilitated mansions. (sociology: local demographics, architecture). The creation of The Playground, in a primarily African-American community (cultural history : community development) was a response to the children in the community who needed a space in which they could play, learn and explore their individual and collective identities. The preexisting playground on this site, English Park, was in poor condition, unsafe and aesthetically unappealing. (city planning: neighborhood parks). The award-winning Kwanzaa Playground is believed to be the first African-inspired didactic playground in Ohio and possibly in the United States.

Responding to the much quoted ancient African proverb that "it takes a village to raise a child" and the kindred adage that "a strong village makes a

strong child" (anthropology: African philosophy and adages) the parents, grandparents, artists, arts councils, community members, educators, corporate funders, city agencies, and mental health agencies formed a supportive partnership with the children. Through their collaboration the playground was physically and philosophically rebuilt. (civics; civic involvement). It contains original works of art from seven, well-known, local, African-American artists (art history: African-American art and civic activity) .

The Kwanzaa Playground has a specific African-centered focus. However, by foregrounding the notions that:

- community engagement in diverse art and prevention activities can help all children to recognize and to claim their right to be safe, to possess self-knowledge and self-esteem and
- it is valuable to become capable, wholesome citizens (social studies/government: citizenship)

the content expressed by The Playground is open to transfer and meaning-making across various cultural and ethnic contexts.

Taking a Closer Look at the Kwanzaa Playground as a Curricular Source

The choice was made to look closely at the Kwanzaa Playground as a source point because this community-based project is local, dynamic in its relationship to the surrounding community and rich in multidisciplinary content that can be translated into integrated curriculum. The permanently installed works of art by seven, local, African-American artists are the African Tell-A-Story Board, conceived by Shirley Bowen and created by Larry Winston Collins, Thrones to the Earth and Sky, by Barbara Chavous, the obelisk or Tekhen, by Pheoris West and Nonno X (in process), ceramic pedestals, by William Agnew and school children, Baobab Tree and Adinkra Fence, by Andrew Scott, African Portal, by Queen Brooks, and the forthcoming installation of seven Kwanzaa Plaques by Laverne Brown. In order to understand the essence and allegorical possibilities of The Playground and the context of the art, Bowen has been liberally quoted:

Seven artists were challenged to draw inspiration from African and African American culture. Myths of creation, traditional values, character-building proverbs, and symbols of rebirth and vital life forces guided the design and development of each component of the Kwanzaa Playground renovation.

The layout and components of the Kwanzaa Playground were designed to help children gain a sense of organic unity, an awareness of relationships, one to the other. The Kwanzaa Playground will benefit the entire extended family, individually and collectively.

The playground's wheelchair accessible walkway is shaped like a human. This anthropomorphic layout was chosen to symbolize the First Ancestor, our common source, our connectedness to the cosmic creator and to each other.

In many African traditions the "head" is the seat of one's character. How the head appears, reflects one's sense of self-worth, self-knowledge and self-esteem. At the head of the playground rests the Baobab Tree, a sacred, serviceable object throughout African cultures—a place where children hear stories to help them grow in harmony with each other and the world.

The obelisk is an ancient symbol of early civilization. It sits on the belly of the playground. As the stomach is considered the center of judgment, the obelisk or TEKHEN, is inscribed with hieroglyphs to proclaim virtues for good living so the stomach will be free of stress and dis-ease.

Our universal connectedness is reinforced by the symbols on the [forthcoming] Kwanzaa Shelter at the left hand and the Thrones to the Earth and Sky at the right foot. The playground fence uses the character-building messages in Adinkra proverbs to inform children's play. Developed by the Asante people in the 19th century, Adinkra proverbs tell stories of wisdom, strength and unity.

One enters the playground through African Portals richly decorated with animal forms. At the African Tell-a-Story Board, children will invent stories of their own. Ceramic pedestals and tiles created with school students' art encircle the rear entrance and adorn the left foot of the Kwanzaa Playground. (Bowen, 1995)

Several opportunities are offered to students who study the Kwanzaa Playground in a curriculum development course. They are able to choose one of the artworks as a research topic so that they can find a perspective for teaching about the art as narrative, object, icon and/or allegory. They may select other ways of addressing the artwork as well. Their research must include inquiry about the artwork that is based on the strategies and content from multiple disciplines. Students are also invited to prepare teaching materials based on their research. As part of the research process, they explore the relationship between and among The Playground, the artwork selected and their lives. They are encouraged to recognize life experiences as an educational variable (Daniel, 1996). Throughout the course, class members are asked to state and question their teaching and life philosophies. Questions about their philosophies encourage students (preteachers) and teachers to explore the soundness of their personal approach to teaching and to connect their beliefs to their approaches to curriculum development. In one instance, a student from Taiwan, H.D., explained that we would understand the complexities of the content of The Playground if we studied the *Shu* (Four Books) of Confucian Literature. H.D. cautioned us that it would take a lifetime to study and understand this literature. However, one could begin by considering the following things about Confucian philosophy:

[It is] theories about the law, life, and the government... Philosophy is a kind of a system of ideas and thoughts that talk about the human's behavior, the rules that you should follow to make a successful life, and about the government...it's about thoughts and theories that teach other people lessons about principles, or rules, about life and it also teaches you a moral (sort of like the morals that are at the end of a fable). Confucius is famous for his philosophy because he made many wise sayings in ancient China that helped many people learn about nature, the world, and the human

behavior. He also helped the government and the emperor by teaching them lessons on how the emperor should rule his kingdom successfully. The Si Shu (Four Books) of Confucian literature...became the textbooks of later Chinese generations (Crystal, 1995).

The recommendation from H.D. to consider the Si Shu was issued after the class was introduced to the Nguzo Saba of Kwanzaa, discussed below. The introduction of specific philosophies was intended to illustrate how art and life lessons can be connected and how the complexity of that connection can be explored through an integrated curriculum approach.

The Kwanzaa Playground project has attracted the attention of local and distant educators who have created lessons and units based on the themes suggested such as: community, family, and heritage. The theme of "community" has been very popular among educators and students. Perhaps they agree with cultural analyst Dr. Marimba Ani who offers that "The source of human morality must necessarily be in the interaction of human beings. It must be communal, which more than 'social,' implies a joining of persons" (p. 206). The various educators, who are using The Playground as a source for curriculum development, are from formal and informal educational settings. Students in my classes have been interested in exploring the life principles and African-centered philosophical positions reflected in each work of art in The Playground and in the overall positive philosophical centering of The Playground (philosophy, art history, aesthetics and criticism: symbolism in art). The Swahili term, Nguzo Saba, or Seven Principles (of Kwanzaa) developed by Dr. R. Karenga, is the value system that underpins The Playground. These values which are the building blocks for community are: umoja (unity), kujichagulia (self-determination), ujima (collective work and responsibility), ujamaa (cooperative economics), nia (purpose), kuumba (creativity), and imani (faith). Like the Si Shu of Confucian Literature the Nguzo Saba are intended to provide lessons for living.

Some of the curriculum materials created also teach about culturally and educationally transferable content such as: 1.) the historical context of works of art (historical inquiry); 2.) the potential for creating personal and shared meanings through interaction with a work of art (meaning making); 3.) how

art can be connected to many aspects of one's life (life-based art), and; 4.) how art can help to explore and define varied and coexisting realities (issues of diversity). As a point of departure for curriculum developers from diverse disciplines, the goals of The Playground are explored, which are to:

- use the arts to assist in beautifying the neighborhood
- function as an intergenerational space for engaging the creative activities of children, youth and adults
- provide unique resources to enhance the self-esteem of African-American children by expanding their world-view
- bond and empower youth, families and artists through shared ownership and collective input
- symbolize the community's will to resolve common problems and
- strengthen youth against crime, alcohol and drug abuse

These goals are grounded in multidisciplinary knowledge. Consequently, individual teachers, students or those working in teams, can probably find a disciplinary "hook" that attaches them to the curriculum development process.

Once curriculum developers are provided with the above narrative they can become involved in inquiry about the content for the purpose of teasing out mutually useful concepts that are relevant to their various disciplines. Then they can begin to make connections.

ReCognizing Works of Art: Using Art as the Anchor

In order to make curricular connections an anchor is needed. Art can be that anchor. The goal is to form an interrelationship between subject area content and strategies by considering specific issues, dilemmas, themes and concepts through the lenses of the various disciplines. We can refer to artworks that have addressed any of these. It is important, however, to keep this process from becoming dominated by an aimless webbing of ideas. The art anchor can provide the thread or theme that focuses the integrating process. For example, in the Kwanzaa Playground the works of art permit us to discover or be informed of thematic and conceptual content such as "community heritage" or "lessons for living". If teachers and students can address the themes through the multiple lenses of their own lives and experiences the

process of using commingled disciplinary content to address a theme might seem more reasonable. We can make the art personally meaningful (whether we like the art or not) by questioning the inspiration for, meaning of, approach to and relevance of each piece.

It is not difficult to find possibilities for curriculum integration using art as an anchor. Chanda and Daniel (2000) point out that looking at art through lenses that integrate the perspectives of both history and culture, for example, encourages the viewer to "reCognize" works of art. They refer to artwork from the Kwanzaa Playground as an example of what it means to reCognize a work of art.:

We are suggesting a way of teaching that explores the nexus between historical and cultural content in works of art using examples of African-descended art as a paradigm for reCognizing. This word looks very similar to recognizing, however, recognizing refers to the act of perceiving, seeing something again or recalling an image. ReCognizing refers to the act of cognitive restructuring one's thinking, getting to know a previously known thing in new ways or an unknown thing, like a work of art, in multiple ways. In order to reCognize we must: (a) go beyond the physical knowing or comprehending to gain a contextual knowing that is constructed by time and place; (b) grasp the inherent character of the work of art situated in time and space, present and past; and (c) recognize its inner force which relates to its timeless ability to address us as a collection of people.

ReCognizing, therefore, demands that we take a broad view of the historical and cultural genesis of images and icons, which link the present to the past. ReCognizing, consequently, entails considering the present meanings in light of the past, past motivations in light of the present, and coexisting realities or truths across time.
(p. 8)

Further explanation of reCognizing as an exercise in curriculum integration is provided by considering an aspect of one of The Playground's artworks, the African Portal, created by Queen Brooks. It is a gateway to one

side of The Playground. Other facts about the African Portal are:

- it is constructed of two eight feet high cedar posts connected across the top by an 11 feet wide cedar post
- all surfaces are embellished with wood burning and painting
- the images on all sides are of real and imaginary objects and animals inspired by Queen's study of African objects, symbols and design elements
- the paintings are bright and polychromatic
- the colors and images on the African Portal provide contrast with the surrounding buildings in the community which are more neutral in color
- this Portal faces the home of a local African-American artist-plumber-activist-arts advocate who is also a Yoruba priest (i.e., participant in a belief system originated by a large West African ethnic group that extends to other continents) and a participant in the creation of The Playground
- one of the symbols on the African Portal is a red bird with a long beak and a large belly

From these observations we can move to the investigation of thematic content related to the African Portal. The artist states that the gateway entrance invites the "exploration of creative paths to self-knowledge". She considers this process to be "a lesson for living" which can occur as you enter and leave the playground. From the artist's ideas we can adopt the slightly adjusted theme of "lessons for living". But, where are the lessons for living to be found in the art and how do we find them? Source points for the search could be the symbols of animals and objects illustrated on the portal. Chanda and Daniel (1997) chose to explore the painted red bird on one of the vertical posts. Their research can be expanded to illustrate how content from multiple disciplines could lead to curricular integration. They recommend exploration of the characteristics and context of the red bird. This can be done by using a collaborative process involving teachers and students across disciplines who create questions relevant to the history and culture of the red bird. The goal of the inquiry process is to discover concepts that help learners to find personal meaning that starts with the art and moves on to the

more expansive arena of their lives. The following questions might be the result:

1. Why is this bird pictured on the African Portal? Does it have anything to do with a children's playground?
2. Why is the red bird at the entrance to the Playground?
3. Is this a familiar bird? If so, what do you know about it?
4. Has the artist commented on the red bird?
5. Since the art in the Kwanzaa Playground is African-inspired, could the red bird be connected to African history and culture?
6. What do you think that the red bird symbolizes?
7. How can you find out more about the red bird?

Students and teachers involved in the process of creating and responding to these questions can approach it from varying perspectives. Historical and cultural information can be extracted from other disciplines such as the sciences, arts, and literature thus moving the research across the curriculum. Students and teachers can brainstorm about the responses to their questions. Teachers should facilitate the process by helping students to see reasonable connections. Asking students the same questions in each of their classes can encourage them to think about the subject of the inquiry in more elaborate ways. However, making connections may not be possible for all subjects and should not be forced.

After brainstorming and conducting research across the curriculum, students might discover the following multidisciplinary content:

1. The large, red bird on the Portal is intended to attract the children and to make them curious.
2. The motif of the bird is similar to a sculpture found among the Senufo people of the Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) of west Africa. The height of the sculpture ranges from about 36 inches to six feet high. Both the sculpted bird and the red bird have a large, protruding stomach.
3. The bird represents the hornbill, a tropical bird found in Africa and Asia.
4. Given the African-inspired imagery of the Playground we can infer

that the red bird is an African ground hornbill.

5. The red bird is a two-dimensional variation of a three-dimensional Senufo bird.
6. The Senufo bird is an icon. It is called a Porgaga or the great mythical bird.
7. There is specific mythology attached to the Senufo bird.
8. The Senufo bird is important imagery related to the development and initiation of young boys through the lo or poro society.
9. The hornbill icon is a symbol of both male and female fertility.
10. The hornbill icon is an allegory for the continuity of the whole community.
11. Inscriptions found on the outspread wings of the hornbill sculpture (tortoise, monitor lizard, and python) relate to the required mastery of a specific body of knowledge and intellectual development for young male initiates leading to knowledge about life.
12. The Senufo sculpture is connected with ancestors, family, village unity and community acts.
13. The Senufo sculpture and the Kwanzaa Playground provide life lessons about ancestry, social customs, future generations and community awareness.
14. The Senufo sculpture guards the entrance to the sacred grove where important ritual events take place in Senufo villages
15. The red bird adorns the formal entrance to the Kwanzaa Playground where the learning that accompanies play can take place (Holas, 1985).

Using art (i.e., the red bird on the African Portal in the context of The Kwanzaa Playground) as the anchor to pull the various disciplinary approaches together, to explore the theme "lessons for living" (i.e., from the African hornbill sculpture, Porgaga) becomes a multifocal example of how we can teach and learn. Discussing, writing about, creating art about, exploring the history, geography and culture of what Porgaga means in the learner's context will probably include topics such as rights of passage, rituals, symbolism, oral and literary tradition, myths, and belief systems. The result of this process can create an inquiry-based method for information-gathering and

knowledge-building that is comprehensive and in concert with the way that we experience life.

Conclusions

What we teach and what students learn should be coherent. It should make sense. When we teach one subject at a time without valuing the natural inter-relationship of ideas and concepts across disciplines, we force students to learn within two incompatible modes: content isolation in school vs. content integration in life. If we share with our students the notion that education is for life it is possible that the process of learning can be empowering for both teachers and learners. Students at all levels have taught us that they may or may not be able to immediately grasp the process of curricular intermingling especially if it is only explored as a cerebral exercise. However, by creating integrated curricula that grow from concrete examples such as the Kwanzaa Playground we can develop our understanding of concepts formed through inquiry about something real. We can use art as the anchor for stabilizing ideas and concepts as we move through various disciplines to avoid the confusion that comes from lack of focus. Arguably, using art as the center of an integrated curriculum may not be the panacea for creating excellent teaching materials and strategies. However, when art works are selected that are inherently interesting, worthy of inquiry, and reflective of human dilemmas they can support meaningful, lifelong learning across the curriculum.

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寬札遊樂場的經驗： 以藝術為核心的統整課程

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摘要

本文旨在針對藝術核心統整課程實務進行各方向的探討。文中說簡要說明藝術教育思潮與趨勢的發展，因應後現代藝術現象課程發展架構與內涵，並說明藝術核心統整課程的價值與重要性。在實務方面的探討中，文中提出筆者們自美國俄亥俄州州立大學藝術教育研究所所進行的學習成果經由社區取向藝術教育課程的開發，實際進行課程設計與課程教學實驗研究的歷程與經驗解析，經由理論與實務的結合，企求檢視藝術核心統整課程在面對教學實務時的需要與調整，以供廣大的教育工作者分享與指教。

關鍵字

藝術核心統整課程 (Integrated Curriculum using Arts as a Core Subject)
社區取向課程 (Community Based Curriculum)
重要觀念 (Big Idea)
議題 (Theme)

前言

本文所提供的例子，在於說明如何以藝術為中心，建立一套統整課程，尤其著重於建立課程內容的過程。這個例子是根據一系列的大學藝術教育課程，

共有七所學校，這些課程視為一個整體，總計進行了9年。所有的課程都包含當地社區的一項藝術計畫，稱為「寬札遊樂場」(Kwanzaa Playground)，以及遊樂場中所陳列的非洲風格藝術作品。選修這些課程的學生，大多是大學部及研究所的師範生與在職進修的教師。其中一個課程是由學生自己設計，他們根據各自的社區藝術活動，歸納出可行的教學法。本文的前提是藝術作品可以做為統整課程的基礎，此外，多元焦點的統整課程，內容應該要有趣、鼓勵學生的探索，討論實際生活相關的觀念而不是只有純理論，這樣的統整課程才能夠更有意義、更易於進行。

知行合一

多年來我有很多學生都發現，我們對教育的探討，與實際的教學之間有所差距。也就是說，教育人士常常倡議教與學的互動過程，所謂各個學科領域之間應該整合融貫；在教學法當中，統整課程也強調不同的思考角度與學科內容，以及文本背景的細微差異，但至今不論在觀念上或實務上，統整課程仍然是一大挑戰 (俄亥俄州立大學 TETAC Mentors, 2002; Pate, Homestead & McGinnis, 1997; Pasedo, 2000; Bailey, 2000)。師範教育及在職進修課程的藝術教師，是否考慮、設計及採用統整課程，與學校的改變息息相關；然而，統整課程不只是將課程內容結合在一起的一種策略，更重要的是鼓勵探索、重新思考現有的教學理念，以及強化師資培育。參與統整課程應該著重於教與學的文化中各層面不同的本質，甚至重重的困難與問題。一位師範教師以科技鼓勵老師自行設計統整課程，對於部分老師和學生提出的關切，他的回應是：

在我的經驗中，學生剛接觸統整課程的時候，態度往往是「我們上數學課為什麼在談歷史」。但是經過進一步的思考，加上教師從旁引導，學生就會瞭解，這樣的方式能夠加強他們的學習，不論在教或學方面都是更有創意的方式。

例如閱讀是所有學科都有的成分，所以核心課程應該整合起來，應該是理所當然的事情。有閱讀能力，才能看懂數學題目，進而解題；才能瞭解小說情節、寫出一篇研究報告；才能明白書本上所描述的重大歷史事件。我們不是生活在真空的世界，當然也不能把學生放在真空的世界。提供學生一套統整融

貫的課程，能夠為學生開啓全新的學習機會。

問題在於不同的學科要如何有效統整起來。教育人士所面臨的一個問題，在於找出共同的時間，一起討論課程如何合作。要建立有效、有創意的統整課程，合作是根本的要素。透過合作，老師才能熟悉其他領域的學習目標，進而瞭解這些目標如何整合到其他學科。

有效的統整課程要有一個明確的計畫：評量及活動要能呈現各個課程之間的關聯，讓學生有機會以創意、有意義的方式，展現學習的成果。運用科技，學生可以利用Power Point軟體將歷史與文學作品的關聯做生動活潑的介紹；用Word軟體寫一篇社會科學理論的評論；用Excel軟體進一步培養他們的數學與繪圖技巧。

歷史、語文、社會、自然及數學各主科之間「一以貫之」的觀念，也反映真實的人生。成功的人生必須對生活中各個層面、各個領域都有一定的掌握，清楚其中的關聯。教育也是一樣的道理。（芝加哥公立學校地區教學科技協調員Pleasant，2003年8月18日個人信函）

雖然主科（也就是語文、數學、歷史、科學）往往是課程設計的焦點，但Pleasant強調藝術教師的貢獻：

…還有一位藝術教師，除了讓學生創作藝術作品之外，更在評量中加入藝術史的知識，指定學生研讀特定藝術家的資料，並寫成報告，以Power Point為全班做介紹，或是只有書面的Word檔案也可以。此外，在創作活動之外（這個例子當中是紙雕），學生還要以雕塑的主題寫一首詩。這是結合不同學科（歷史、語文和藝術）一個非常好的例子。

（芝加哥公立學校地區教學科技協調員Pleasant，2003年8月18日個人信函）

寬札遊樂場：以社區活動做為課程統整的基礎

以下介紹寬札遊樂場計畫，包括遊樂場的基本概念，與真實生活有關的可能

性，以及以藝術為核心所建立的統整課程。方括號中表示學科及／或概念可能的出發點。

寬札遊樂場的構想是1993年由藝術家Shirley Bowen所提出的，1995年完成。Bowen也身兼教育人士、積極參與社區活動，談到她的根本理念，她說：

對我們來說，遊樂場計畫成爲一個戶外的學習實驗室，探討遊戲在兒童生活中所扮演的角色，如何應用非洲藝術的概念來教育、影響、薰陶我們的孩子和家庭。在這個荒廢的遊樂場重建的過程中，我們有許多寶貴的經歷，重建了人際關係，促進了溝通，教育民眾有關非洲的價值與觀念，尤其是對於身邊充斥著犯罪、暴力、吸毒的孩子，整個活動提高了他們的自尊。

(Bowen, 1996年個人信函)

Bowen倡議這項活動，構想是來自她九歲的兒子Calid，孩子曾經對她說，真希望能有一個比較好的地方可以玩，因此激發她希望重建遊樂場【歷史／政治：社區行動】。遊樂場所在的地區，在社會及文化方面面臨許多挑戰，但同時也有許多的機會與優勢。在重建的過程中，社區一方面有酗酒、毒品、犯罪等等問題，但另一方面藝術界蓬勃發展，社會及政治參與活躍，地方經濟也在復甦。當地的建築從簡陋的住家到重新開發的豪宅都有【社會學：地方人口、建築】。在這個黑人爲主的社區重建遊樂場，是爲滿足當地兒童的需求，孩子需要一個可以玩耍、學習、探索個人與集體文化認同的地方。遊樂場的原址本來是「英吉利公園」，環境乏人維護也不安全，外觀設計也不美觀【都市計畫：社區公園】。寬札遊樂場後來贏得獎項，相信是俄亥俄州第一座以黑人文化爲主題的教育遊樂場，甚至是全美第一座。

非洲有一句古諺「養個孩子要全村」，又說「村子好，孩子才會好」【人類學：非洲哲學及諺語】。因此，當地的父母親、祖父母、藝術家、藝術委員會、社區成員、教育人士、企業領袖、政府機關、心理衛生機關等攜手合作，共同爲下一代而努力。透過各界的合作，不只是遊樂場的硬體重建了，心靈的遊樂場也同時重建【市民文化：市民參與】，更包含當地七位知名黑人藝術家的創作【藝術史：黑人藝術與市民活動】。

寬札遊樂場是以黑人爲重點，然而也包含其他的觀念：

- 社區共同參與各種不同的藝術與防治活動，能夠促進兒童更瞭解自己
有權要求安全的環境、建立自己的認同與自尊；
- 做一個有能力、完整的市民，是非常寶貴的經驗【社會研究 / 政府：
市民權益】

遊樂場所呈現的內容，可以根據不同的文化與族群背景而轉移，或重新詮釋其意義。

以寬札遊樂場做為課程基礎：深入分析

選擇以寬札遊樂場做為課程的出發點，是因為這是一個社區計畫，與鄰近社區關係密切，而且內容涵蓋許多不同學科，適合成為統整的課程。遊樂場永久陳列七位當地黑人藝術家的裝置藝術作品，包括《黑人故事板》(African Tell-A-Story Board)，由Shirley Bowen所設計、Larry Winston Collins負責創作；還有Barbara Chavous的《天地寶座》(Thrones to the Earth and Sky)；Pheoris West與Nommo X的《塔克罕方尖碑》(Tekhen)（尚未完成）；William Agnew與學童合作的陶瓷臺座；Andrew Scott的《猴麵包樹與阿丁卡拉圍籬》(Baobab Tree and Adinkra Fence)；Queen Brooks的《非洲大門》(African Portal)；以及Laverne Brown即將完成的裝置藝術，七片《寬札之匾》(Kwanzaa Plaques)。Bowen的一段話，說明了遊樂場的根本精神與象徵意義，以及藝術的背景，她說：

七位藝術家接受挑戰，以非洲和美國黑人文化為題材，包括創世神話、傳統價值觀、勵志格言、重生與生命力之象徵等等，為寬札遊樂場創作適當的作品。

寬札遊樂場的規劃與設計，是為增進孩子的有機整體的感受、瞭解彼此的關係。寬札遊樂場讓整個大家庭，不論個別家庭或集體，都能受惠。

遊樂場的無障礙輪椅步道，設計為人體的形狀，以象徵先祖，我們共同的起源，我們與造物主和彼此之間的緊密關聯。

在許多非洲傳統中，「頭」乃是一個人的性格主宰，「頭」的外觀反映著一個人對自己的評價、看法與自尊。所以遊樂場的「頭部」種了猴麵包樹，在非洲各地的文化中，猴麵包樹是神

聖、用途廣泛的一種樹木，孩子常常圍在樹下聽故事，瞭解人與人、人與周遭世界如何維持和諧。

方尖碑是古老的文明象徵，位於遊樂場的「腹部」。黑人文化中認為腹部是判斷力所在，所以方尖碑（或稱「塔克罕」）上刻著象形文字，宣揚良好的生活習慣，胃部才能不受壓力與疾病之苦。

人類普遍的關聯，由左手位置（即將完成）的寬札中心和右腳位置的天地寶座為象徵。遊樂場的圍牆採用阿丁卡拉的勵志格言，這是19世紀亞桑特族人留下的珍貴遺產，闡釋著智慧、力量和團結的故事。

遊樂場的入口是非洲大門，孩子可以自己創造故事。遊樂場後門入口和左腳位置，則環繞著學童藝術作品的陶瓷臺座和地磚。

(Bowen, 1995)

學生在一門課程設計課當中研究寬札遊樂場，有許多的探索機會。他們可以選擇其中一件藝術作品做研究題目，找出適當的教學角度，以藝術為敘述、目標、圖像及／或象徵，也可以用其他方式來探討藝術作品。這些研究必須從不同的學科領域探討該藝術作品的策略和內容，也可以根據研究結果，設計適當的教材。在研究過程中，也探討遊樂場、所選擇之藝術作品以及他們個人生活之間的關聯。學生也可以找出相關的生活經驗，做為教育上的變數 (Daniel, 1996)。在整個課程中，學生隨時都要說明及檢視他們的教學理念與人生觀。這些問題有助於師範生及在職教師思考本身的教學法是否合宜，同時將他們的理念與課程設計相結合。有一位來自台灣的學生H. D.指出，唸過儒家的《四書》，能夠有助於瞭解寬札遊樂場複雜的內涵。H. D.表示，要瞭解《四書》可能要窮畢生之力，但是一開始可以先思考孔子思想中的一些觀念：

這是關於法律、人生、政府的理論……哲學乃一套思想觀念體系，規範人類的行為，如何才能享有圓滿的人生；也有關於政府……有關於教導人生之原則、規範的思想和理論，以及道德教誨（有點像寓言故事最後的啓示）。孔子的哲學非常有名，因為他提出許多名言，幫助當時的中國人更瞭解大自然、身邊的

世界以及人類行為。他也幫助各地政府及君王，教導他們如何治國。儒家的《四書》……成爲後世的教科書。(Crystal, 1995)

H.D 建議讀《四書》，是在班上討論過「寬札之七大原則」(Nguzo Saba of Kwanzaa) 之後(請見下文的說明)。介紹特定的哲學，是爲凸顯藝術與人生的課題能夠結合，可以透過統整的課程深入探索這些複雜的議題。

寬札遊樂場計畫，受到當地及其他地區教育人士的重視，並根據建議的主題來設計他們的課程與單元，例如社區、家庭、傳統等等。「社區」的主題很受老師與學生歡迎，也許他們都同意文化分析家Marimba Ani 博士所說的「人類的倫理道德，必然源於人與人的互動，必然是社區共有的，不僅是『社會』，更表示人與人的緊密關連 (p. 206)。」採用寬札遊樂場以設計課程的教育人士，有的受過正式的教育，也有的來自非正式的教育背景。我班上的學生著手探討遊樂場的各件藝術作品當中所反映的人生哲理和黑人的哲學立場，以及遊樂場整體的積極觀念【哲學、藝術史、美學及藝術批評：藝術中的象徵】。斯瓦希里語所謂的Nguzo Saba 就是「七大原則」，是由R. Karenga 博士所設計，也正是遊樂場的根本價值體系、建立社區的基石，包括團結、自決、集體工作與責任、合作經濟、目標、創意，以及信念。正如儒家的《四書》，Nguzo Saba 同樣也是人生哲理。

課程教材中也包含各文化、各地教育都適用的內容，例如 (1) 藝術作品的歷史背景【歷史探討】；(2) 透過與藝術作品的互動，創造個人及共同的意義【建立意義】；(3) 藝術能夠與人生的許多層面相結合【基於生活的藝術】；(4) 藝術有助於探討各不相同但同時存在的真實世界，找出其定義【多樣化的議題】。各個不同學科領域的課程設計，可以參考遊樂場的目標，做爲出發點，包括：

- 透過藝術美化社區環境
- 成爲跨越年齡的空間，讓兒童、青少年與成人共同參與創意活動
- 提供獨特的資源，擴展美國黑人兒童的世界觀，提高其自尊心
- 透過共同的歸屬感與集體的 effort，讓青少年、家庭與藝術家建立緊密的關係，加強其自主意識
- 揭示社區解決共同問題的決心
- 強化青少年抗拒犯罪、酗酒、吸毒的力量

這些目標都以多元學科的知識為基礎，因此，每一位老師、學生或合作團隊，大概都可以找到一個學科的「關聯性」，將這些目標與課程設計結合起來。

課程設計人員瞭解上述的說明之後，就可以開始探討各科的內容，隨時不忘共同的概念與目標，將之結合在不同的學科領域。

重識藝術作品：以藝術為核心

要結合各科課程，需要一個核心，藝術就可以成為這樣的軸心。課程統整的目標是要從各科不同的角度，考量特定議題、困難、主題、概念，以建立各學科內容、策略之間的交互關聯。藝術作品可以串連上述的任何層面，避免淪為各種概念毫無意義的堆積。以藝術做為一條軸心、一個核心主旨，能夠讓統整過程不至模糊了焦點。例如，寬札遊樂場所陳列的藝術作品，讓我們能夠去發掘、瞭解「社區傳統」、「人生啓示」等主題或概念內容。如果老師和學生能夠透過個人生活中的多元角度來看待這些主題，那麼採用跨學科的內容來探討這些主題，才能更合情合理。針對每一件藝術作品探討其創作動機、意義、手法與關聯，能夠讓藝術對個人更有意義（不論我們是否喜歡某一件作品）。

以藝術為核心進行課程統整，這樣的可能性很多。例如Chanda與Daniel (2000) 就指出，從歷史和文化的雙重角度來看藝術，有助於「重識」藝術作品的內涵。他們以寬札遊樂場的藝術作品為例，說明何謂「重識」一件藝術作品：

我們建議一種教學方式，以非洲傳統藝術為範本，探討藝術作品的歷史與文化內容，這種教學法稱為「重識」法，雖然看起來與「認識」很像，但是「認識」指的是感受的行為，再次看到或回想起一個影像。「重識」則是將思想做認知上的重組，對原本知道的東西產生新的認識，或是從多元的角度去瞭解原本不知道的東西，例如藝術作品。要做到「重識」，我們必須 (a) 超越表面的認識，對時、空背景有深入的瞭解；(b) 從時間與空間、今與昔，掌握藝術作品的內在特質；(c) 認識其永恆的內在力量，對世人整體的永恆影響。

因此，「重識」要求我們綜觀影像與圖像的歷史、文化起源，

找出今與昔的關聯。所以，「重識」必須從過去來思考現在的意義，從現在來思考過去的動機，以及跨越時間、今昔並存的真實或真理。(p. 8)

遊樂場的藝術作品中，《非洲大門》的一個層面還可以進一步說明以「重識」做為課程統整的手段。《非洲大門》由Queen Brooks所創作，是遊樂場的側門入口，其特色包括：

- 以雪松原木為材料，高8呎，中間橫柱11呎
- 柱子表面有燒灼及繪畫的裝飾
- 柱子表面的圖像都是Brooks根據非洲藝術、象徵及設計元素，所創作的真實或想像的事物及動物
- 繪畫色彩鮮明豐富
- 《非洲大門》的色彩與圖像，與周遭環境的中性色調建築物形成對比
- 非洲大門面對著一位當地黑人藝術家的住所，他是社區藝術活躍人士，也是一位優魯巴祭司（優魯巴的信仰源於西非的優魯巴人，並擴展至其他各洲），同時並參與遊樂場的重建計畫
- 《非洲大門》的象徵中包括一種長嘴、腹部凸出的紅色大鳥

瞭解這些特色之後，我們就可以探討有關《非洲大門》的主題內容。創作者指出，大門入口鼓勵每個人「探索創意的途徑以瞭解自我」。她認為這個過程是「人生的啓示」，在踏入遊樂場或離開之際，都可能有所體會。但是，從藝術中能夠獲得的人生啓示在哪裡，又如何找到這些啓示呢？追尋的起點也許是門柱上所畫的事物與動物的象徵，Chanda與Daniel (1997) 決定探討垂直的門柱上所畫的紅鳥。他們的研究可以進一步擴展，說明如何利用多元學科的內容進行課程整合。他們建議探討紅鳥的特徵與背景，做法可以包括各學科的師生一起合作，探討有關紅鳥歷史與文化的問題，探討過程的目標在於找出一些概念，能夠幫助學生從藝術出發，找出屬於個人的意義，進而擴展至生活中其他更廣闊的領域。可能思考的問題例如：

- 1 為什麼《非洲大門》上會畫著這種鳥？這種鳥與兒童遊樂場有什麼關聯嗎？
- 2 紅鳥為什麼出現在遊樂場的入口？
- 3 你知道這種鳥嗎？如果知道，你對牠有什麼認識？

- 4 創作者對紅鳥有沒有什麼說明？
- 5 寬札遊樂場的藝術都是屬於非洲風格，那麼紅鳥是否與非洲的歷史文化有關聯？
- 6 你認為紅鳥有什麼象徵？
- 7 你要如何找出更多有關紅鳥的事情？

教師和學生共同決定所要探討的問題，再尋求答案，實際的做法則有許多不同的角度。歷史和文化的資料可以從其他學科著手，例如科學、藝術、文學，如此就可以將研究跨越到所有課程。師生可以腦力激盪，共同尋求解答；老師應該協助學生的探索過程，幫助他們找出合理的關聯。在每一門課上都詢問相同的問題，能夠鼓勵學生更深入的思考他們探討的主題。然而，並不一定所有的學科都能夠找出關聯，也不應該過於勉強。

在腦力激盪及跨學科的研究之後，學生也許會發現以下的心得：

- 1 《非洲大門》上的紅色大鳥，目的在於吸引兒童，引起他們的好奇心。
- 2 紅鳥的主題，類似西非象牙海岸的瑟努佛族人常見的一種大型雕塑，高可達3至6尺，特徵就在於腹部大而凸出。
- 3 紅鳥代表非洲和亞洲常見的一種熱帶鳥，稱為犀鳥。
- 4 因為遊樂場的藝術都是非洲黑人風格，所以可想而知紅鳥是非洲陸犀鳥。
- 5 門柱上平面的紅鳥，是瑟努佛人立體雕塑的一種變化。
- 6 瑟努佛人的大鳥是一種偶像，稱為「帕加加」，意思是神秘的大鳥。
- 7 關於瑟努佛大鳥有一些特別的神話傳說。
- 8 犀鳥圖像也是男性與女性生育能力的象徵。
- 9 瑟努佛大鳥是很重要的圖像，象徵少年在社會上逐漸長大而終於成年。
10. 犀鳥的圖像，象徵整個社區的傳承與延續。
11. 犀鳥展開的雙翼上所刻畫的圖像（龜、蜥蜴、蟒蛇）代表少年所必須學會的特定知識及智能，才能夠進入成人的世界，瞭解人生的意義。
12. 瑟努佛雕塑是關於祖先、家庭、村落團結與社區行為。
13. 瑟努佛雕塑與寬札遊樂場，都是有關祖先、社會習俗、未來世代及

社區意識的人生啓示。

14. 瑟努佛雕塑守衛著神聖叢林的入口，瑟努佛族人的重要儀式就在他們的村落裡舉行。
15. 在寬札遊樂場，紅鳥裝飾著主要入口，歡迎兒童進入寓教於樂的天地 (Holás, 1985)。

以藝術為核心（也就是將《非洲大門》上的紅鳥應用在寬札遊樂場的環境），結合不同的學科領域，以探索「人生啓示」的主題（也就是從非洲犀鳥雕塑「波加加」出發），成為多元焦點的教與學一個很好的例子。從學生的背景來討論「波加加」的意義，以此寫作、創作藝術，探索其歷史、地理及文化，可能涉及的主題包括成年、儀式、象徵、口述及文學傳統、神話，以及信仰體系。整個過程的結果，能夠創造出蒐集資訊、建立知識的「探索教學法」，全方位涵蓋各個學科，如此也才能反映真實的生活經驗。

結論

我們的教學，與學生學到的東西，內容應該一致連貫，應該有意義。如果一次教一個科目，卻沒有找出各學科領域的觀念、概念之間本來就存在的交互關聯，則是強迫學生面對兩種互不相容的學習模式，學校裡教的內容是孤立的，但在生活中的內容卻是統合的。如果與學生分享為生活而教育的觀念，那麼學習的過程就可能讓老師和學生都有更大的收穫。不論哪一層級的學生，有些人可以立刻掌握課程之間的關聯，尤其是做為智力鍛鍊的活動時，但有些人領悟也許比較慢。然而，以具體的例子為基礎來建立統整課程，例如寬札遊樂場，探究真實的事情，就能培養我們對概念的瞭解。我們可以以藝術為核心，在跨越不同的學科領域之際，藝術可以成為各觀念、概念之間串連的軸線，以避免模糊了焦點。誠然，以藝術為統整課程的核心，不一定是教材、教法設計的萬靈丹，但只要能選對藝術作品，本身有趣、值得探究，也能反映人類的困難，這樣的作品就能支援各個學科，做有意義、終身的學習。

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